



CITY OF CORONADO

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

SEPTEMBER 17, 2024

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AUTHORIZE APPROPRIATION OF \$50,000 FOR A SIX-MONTH EXTENSION OF THE BASIC LIFE SUPPORT AMBULANCE TRANSPORT PILOT PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize appropriation of \$50,000 from the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget for a six-month extension of the Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance transport program.

BACKGROUND:

The Coronado Fire Department provides emergency medical services with a full complement of firefighter/paramedics delivering an Advanced Life Support (ALS) level of care. Every 911 call receives this ALS response, regardless of patient condition or acuity. This summer, the Fire Department piloted a temporary program that placed in service a Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance unit, consisting of the City's existing reserve ambulance staffed with temporary Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) employees. Focusing on the lowest medical acuity calls, the BLS unit added surge capacity in the busy summer season and allowed the City to tailor the resource response to the intensity of medical need. Use of the BLS ambulance preserved the ALS ambulance for highest-acuity calls, such as heart attacks, which require a paramedic response.

The summer pilot program operated from June 23 to September 23, 2024.

ANALYSIS:

The outcomes of the summer pilot program were successful. The City experienced positive impacts to ambulance response time, increased ALS ambulance availability for high acuity calls, successful triaging of medical needs and a decrease in mutual aid ambulances from other jurisdictions. This resulted in a higher level of service for the community. Additionally, the BLS unit partnered with the Coronado Police Department for the transport of psychiatric patients to non-emergency room alternate service locations, thereby preserving Coronado Police resources in the City. Finally, the EMTs also supported the beach lifeguards during holidays and weekends by managing stingray envenomation patients. Lifeguards were able to turn over patients to the EMTs and return to their core lifeguarding duties, thereby increasing safety on the beach, while the patients received focused medical attention from the EMTs.

With the success of the summer pilot, the Fire Department seeks to continue the pilot for an additional six months. The purpose is to continue this level of care in the off-season, and evaluate the impacts on services, and gather data for use in the Community Risk Assessment Study that will initiate in the winter of 2024/25. This Study will help the City characterize the emergency medical and fire needs of Coronado now and for the next 50 years, with recommendations to shape the fire station replacement project.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Call volume projections based on the past three years estimate that the BLS unit would transport approximately 75 patients during the six-month period. The estimated cost for the proposed six-month extension, primarily for temporary wages, is \$70,000. After applying the remaining Fiscal

Year 2024-25 budget in the temporary salary account (#100254-7014), the requested budget appropriation is \$50,000.

These costs will be partially offset with transport fee revenues. With the existing EMS User Fee structure, the estimated number of transports would result in approximately \$37,500 of revenue. If EMS fees are adjusted after the fee study is presented to the City Council in September, the rate of cost recovery could be higher, potentially covering the entirety of program costs.

ALTERNATIVE:

The Council may choose to request additional information or provide other direction.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT:

Not applicable.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.

Submitted By: Fire Department / Chief Summers